



# **POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERNSHIP**

MAY, 2014



## **1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

- 1.1.** The University of Seychelles, thereafter ‘UniSey’, engages itself in internship programs for the benefit of its students. UniSey values internship opportunities for its students immensely and will continue to work with local and international organisations (government or NGOs) to provide internship prospects to students across all disciplines, subject to terms and conditions.
- 1.2.** The primary goal of an internship is to give students an opportunity to apply lessons learned in the classroom to a real-world experience set in a professional practice-oriented environment, with the intern’s work preferably overseen by a professional. In addition to offering students the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their technical skills, it allows students to develop professional skills such as teamwork, effective communication, social interaction and professional networking, an understanding of business procedures, leadership, and critical thinking. Finally, internship provides students with work experience within a semi-formal academic framework that carries with it official recognition in the form of a grade from the University of Seychelles.
- 1.3.** Internship at university level reflects the essential partnership between the academia and those practising the profession in the community. UniSey’s role in the partnership is to ensure that students have quality hands-on learning experiences. It is hoped that internship will also enhance the lines of communication between the University and professionals in business, industry and government. UniSey views internship as a value-added component to its degree programmes.

## **2. POLICIES FOR INTERNSHIP**

- 2.1.** Generally, students go on internship each year during the July – August period only. There may, however, be special circumstances, depending on the specificity of some programmes allowing students to embark on internship at different intervals and for longer periods.
- 2.2.** All students following external programmes from the University of London are required to participate for a minimum of 320 clock hours of internship during their stay at UniSey. In the event that a student cannot secure an internship that is equivalent to this minimum requirement, s/he should require an exemption approval from the Internship Coordinator. The 320 hours may be covered in two separate blocks in the same or in different organisations, depending on circumstances and on the nature of the occupation. In all cases, the arrangement will have to be approved by the Internship Coordinator.
- 2.3.** As required by University Internship Policy, new internship sites should be visited by the Internship Coordinator prior to submitting the internship for approval. Sites where interns have been placed in the immediate past five years need not be visited prior to approving an intern’s placement there.
- 2.4.** The nature of the internship should reflect the intern’s field of study; any exceptions being subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.
- 2.5.** It is the duty of the Internship Coordinator to identify placements for internship.

- a) Students may suggest an organisation, but the latter should not be owned or managed by family members.
  - b) Students may avail themselves of the right to refuse, only once, an organisation selected on their behalf by the Internship coordinator. In such cases, they must collaborate to identify an alternative placement.
  - c) Local organisations should primarily be selected for placement, so that no special accommodation arrangements are required during the internship period.
  - d) Students wishing to do internship outside Seychelles should do so at their own expense, except for arrangements specially worked out by the University of Seychelles.
- 2.6.** An organisation reserves its right to recompense (or not) students on internship in its midst.
- 2.7.** UniSey will provide internship evaluation forms to be used by the organisation and by the intern. It is the student's responsibility to give the appropriate form to his/her supervisor within the selected organisation.
- 2.8.** The student, the field supervisor, and a designated faculty member all submit an internship evaluation report on the prescribed form.
- 2.9.** The grades available for internships are limited to: Excellent, Good, Poor, Incomplete, & Withdrawal.
- 2.10.** Upon recommendation of the student and the Internship Coordinator, UniSey may terminate an approved internship in the best interest of the student for concerns of health and safety, legality or educational validity.
- 2.11.** UniSey will not be responsible for any financial obligations incurred by the student for his/her participation in the internship.
- 2.12.** Under the university insurance policy, students are covered for injuries sustained while on internship.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

There are three main parties under UniSey internship program: the Internship Coordinating Centre, the students, and the host organisation. This section outlines the fundamental responsibilities of the three parties as a way of making each one of them aware of what is expected of them.

#### **3.1. The Internship Coordinating Centre**

- 3.1.1.** UniSey appoints an **Internship Coordinator** whose main roles are to: seek internship opportunities from local and international organisations, coordinate links between the internship sites and the University, and organise placement, supervision and evaluation of the interns. The Internship Coordinator also agrees to advise students on their roles, duties and responsibilities before, during and after the internship. S/he carries out a risk assessment exercise on potential organisations and agrees to communicate relevant information to all parties

concerned on case by case occurrences. The Internship Coordinator may hold other responsibilities within the University.

**3.1.2.** Each academic faculty may automatically be designated as **UniSey Internship Supervisor**. His or her main roles are to visit the interns at least once during their placement, alert the respective authority of issues arising during internship, and appraise any tasks which the interns will have completed. UniSey Internship Supervisors are allocated to the interns depending on the nature of the internship and of the organisation.

## **3.2. Students**

**3.2.1.** Under the internship policy and procedures, students on internship are the University's ambassadors to the organisation and they must, at all times, demonstrate excellent aptitude and overall conduct. Students agree to participate fully in internship and complete all relevant tasks assigned to them by the University and by the organisation, as long as these tasks are in line with provisions contained in the internship contract. Students are expected to alert in writing all concerned parties whenever they feel that they are not being treated in accordance with the provisions of the agreed internship contract. Students may request permission in writing from the University to terminate an internship within an organisation. After prompt investigation, the University will notify the student of an outcome within three working days. For all other regular situations, students are expected to submit to the Internship Coordinator all relevant documents or assignments within two weeks of the internship completion.

## **3.3. The Host Organisation**

**3.3.1.** An internship provides organisations with an effective outreach to qualified and motivated students. Internship comprises educational and mentoring components that can only be satisfied through a formal partnership between the organisation and the University. The internship program provides a meaningful learning experience to students as prospective professionals. In this manner, the host organisation becomes an important asset in the growth of interns. As a secondary benefit, the host organisation has access to well-qualified students as potential candidates for full-time employment after graduation. As a tertiary benefit, the programme allows the organisation to evaluate prospective long-term employees under actual work conditions at minimal cost. Initial contacts through internship may lead to recruitment and eventual hiring, upon graduation, of an employee with experience in the employer's operating procedures. The presence of interns may provide full-time employed professionals with leeway to handle more complex work within the organisation. The host organisation hence:

**3.3.1.1.** Assigns a full-time professional as Field Supervisor.

**3.3.1.2.** Prepares a Letter of Agreement outlining the organisation's understanding of the internship it intends to offer, typically under the following headings:

- a. Nature of the internship – A brief statement that describes the nature of the internship, the profile of students appropriate for the work, and a statement on how the students may benefit.
- b. Status of the Intern – A brief description of the intern's status within the agency, the expected number of hours per week, and any details pertaining to recompense.
- c. Job Description – A broad statement of the job function that describes the intern's duties and responsibilities, including the identification of a "chain of command" for reporting purposes. The name and position title of the expected supervisor should also be included.
- d. Organisation-Specific Guidelines and Requirements for Interns – A detailed list of what the organisation expects of the intern and a definition of the organisation's obligations to the intern should be provided. The former may include items such as the intern's specific job functions and/or the intern's professional responsibilities with regard to the organisation's policies for office conduct.

**3.3.1.3.** Sends to the Internship Coordinating Centre this letter of agreement. The letter is then signed by the student, the host organisation, and the Internship Coordinator on behalf of UniSey.

**3.3.1.4.** Provides pertinent policies and procedures to the prospective intern before s/he begins working.

**3.3.1.5.** Maintains the 'intern' status of the student, to be distinguished from 'employment' status.

**3.3.1.6.** Notifies UniSey of any decision to remove the student from the internship prior to the agreed upon time, due to the student's failure to comply with rules or regulations, and provides a written report to the University regarding the reasons for terminating the internship contract.

**3.3.1.7.** For regular cases, the host organisation completes and submits to the Internship Coordinator the Internship Final Evaluation by the deadline agreed upon.

#### **4. STUDENT ASSIGNMENT AND EVALUATION**

**4.1.** Evaluation forms an integral part of university activities. Even if for some students participation in internship does not necessarily contribute to their overall grades, emphasis is placed on this program to improve their employability status. Hence, students should view internship as a gateway to demonstrate the applicability of knowledge being developed at university. To ensure that students take internship

seriously, provision has been made to include such requirement as part of their scholarship agreement. An end of internship evaluation has been prepared to add value to this program.

- 4.2. Students are expected to complete a log sheet covering each day of their internship period and an end of internship reflection describing their experiences.
- 4.3. The Field Supervisor will complete a report on the student, as per given form.
- 4.4. On recommendation of the Field Supervisor, students will be given an overall grade summarizing the outcomes of the internship. The grades are limited to: Excellent, Good, Poor, Incomplete, & Withdrawal.

## **5. PROCEDURES**

5.1. This section mainly addresses internship procedures and guidelines for students following the University of London External Programmes. It specifies some critical dates by which specific tasks should be completed. Students following other programmes with different academic calendars are likely to have different timelines assigned to them.

5.1.1. During the first two weeks of November, the Internship Coordinator liaises with local organisations and seeks internship opportunities for students.

5.1.2. During the first week of January, the Internship Coordinator advertises the opportunities and students apply for same. Application closes at the end of February.

5.1.3. In March, the Internship Coordinator compiles all the applications, works on the logistics, and in liaison with the organisations, approves or rejects the applications.

5.1.4. Students are advised of any outcome by the end of March. This is also the time when appeals can be made.

5.1.5. By the end of April, all students should have secured a place for internship and been assigned a UniSey Internship Supervisor.

5.1.6. By mid-May, the list of Internship Supervisors is confirmed and information is communicated to all parties.

## **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

6.1. The University of Seychelles recommends that the Internship Coordinating Centre and the Host Organisation carry out a risk assessment exercise prior to the start of the internship.

6.2. The risk assessment must take into account the following factors:

6.2.1. inexperience and immaturity;

- 6.2.2. lack of awareness of existing or potential risks;
  - 6.2.3. the fitting and layout of the workplace and/or workstation;
  - 6.2.4. the nature, degree and duration of any exposure to physical, biological and chemical agents;
  - 6.2.5. the form, range and use of work equipment and the way in which it is handled;
  - 6.2.6. the organisation of processes and activities;
  - 6.2.7. the extent of the supervision to be provided to the student;
  - 6.2.8. the extent of the health and safety training provided, or to be provided, to the student concerned;
  - 6.2.9. any issues relating to student's behaviour and/or learning needs.
- 6.3. If the Coordinating Centre and the Host Organisation conclude that, as a result of the assessment, a significant risk is posed to the student undertaking this internship, the student must be prohibited from going ahead with it.
- 6.4. The Host Organisation must ensure that the control measures identified during the risk assessment exercise are implemented. The Field Supervisor must be provided with a copy of the risk assessment report.

## **7. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

- 7.1. Students should also take the necessary steps to report all matters, such as cases of abuse or harassment, to the concerned parties. Whilst UniSey will take all measures to ensure that the students are placed in a secure environment, it also the responsibility of the students to take care of themselves at all times and not make themselves vulnerable to any risky situations or engage in indecent or illegal activities.

It is the intention of the University to ensure that all students benefit from the internship programme.